

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (cancelled)
2. (currently amended): A game machine according to claim 1~~1~~, further comprising:
volume control means for controlling an output volume of the ~~post-amble of the first~~
~~original~~ connection music.
3. (currently amended): A game machine according to claim 1~~1~~ or claim 2, further
comprising:
volume control means for controlling an output volume of the preamble of the ~~second~~
original music.
4. (currently amended): A game machine according to claim 1~~1~~ or claim 2, wherein
a tempo of the connection music is determined based on a tempo of the ~~main part of the first~~
original music.
5. (currently amended): A game machine according to claim 1~~1~~ or claim 2, wherein
a tempo of the connection music is predetermined as stored, based on a tempo of the
~~main part of the second~~ original music.
6. (currently amended): A game machine according to claim 1~~1~~ or claim 2, further
comprising:
connection music tempo control means for controlling a tempo of the connection music
so as to gradually vary ~~from a tempo~~ based on a tempo of the ~~main part of the first~~ original music
~~to a tempo based on a tempo of the main part of the second original music.~~
7. - 10 (canceled)

11. (currently amended): A game machine, comprising:

original music storage means for storing audio data concerning original music containing a preamble and a main part subsequent thereto;

~~main part start timing storage means for storing main part start timing data indicative of main part start timing of the original music;~~

connection music storage means for storing audio data concerning predetermined connection music corresponding to the original music ~~said connection music having a duration that is substantially shorter than the duration of said original music and a specific predefined association with said original music;~~

original music reproduction start timing storage means for storing original music reproduction start timing data indicative of ~~original music preamble reproduction start timing of the original music~~ during performance of a period when the connection music, which is set such that a period between the reproduction start timing and the end timing of the connection music coincides with the length of the preamble of the corresponding original music is output;

connection music output means for outputting ~~during automated game play~~ the connection music based on the audio data concerning the connection music;

original music reproduction start timing monitoring means for monitoring ~~during automated game play~~ original music reproduction start timing based on the original music reproduction start timing data during a period when the connection music is output;

original music reproduction means for beginning reproduction of the original music while overlapping with the connection music preamble ~~while suppressing an output volume for the original music, upon arrival of original music reproduction start timing during automated game play;~~

~~main part start timing monitoring means for monitoring during automated game play main part start timing based on the main part start timing data after reproduction of the preamble of the original music was started; and~~

~~original music volume control means for increasing an output volume for the original music upon arrival of the main part start timing during automated game play.~~

12. (original): A game machine according to claim 11, wherein the original music reproduction means begins reproduction of the original music while maintaining the output volume at zero.

13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended): A game music output method for outputting original music, having a preamble and a main part subsequent thereto, and predetermined corresponding connection music, which is executable during automated game play, comprising:

a timing storing step of storing original music reproduction start timing data indicative of a reproduction start timing of the original music during performance of the connection music, which is set such that a period between a reproduction start timing and an end timing of the connection music coincides with the length of the preamble of the corresponding original music ;

an original music reproduction start timing monitoring step of monitoring original music reproduction start timing based on the original music reproduction start timing data during a period when the connection music is output;

an original music output step of outputting at least the main part of original music containing a preamble and the main part subsequent thereto; and

a connection music output step of outputting said predetermined connection music corresponding to the original music; and ~~, having a specific predefined association with said original music as stored, during a period when the preamble of the original music is being output, said connection music having a predetermined start timing data that determines the timing for readout of said associated original music~~

an original music reproduction step of beginning reproduction of the original music while overlapping with the connection music, upon arrival of original music reproduction start timing.

15. - 18 (cancelled)

19. (previously presented): A game program distribution device for distributing a program, said program being operative for causing a computer to execute a plurality of steps, said steps comprising:

a first original music output step of outputting during automated game play at least a main part and a post-amble subsequent thereto of first original music;

a second original music output step of outputting during automated game play at least a preamble and a main part subsequent thereto of second original music; and

a connection music output step of outputting during automated game play predetermined connection music, having a specific predefined association including start timing with said original music as stored, during a period between main part end timing of the first original music and main part start timing of the second original music, and concurrent with at least the output of said preamble.

20. (previously presented): A game program distribution method for distributing a program, said program being operative for having a computer to execute a plurality of steps, said steps comprising:

a first original music output step of outputting during automated game play at least a main part and a post-amble subsequent thereto of first original music;

a second original music output step of outputting during automated game play at least a preamble and a main part subsequent thereto of second original music; and

a connection music output step of outputting during automated game play predetermined connection music, having a specific predefined association including start timing with said original music as stored, during a period between main part end timing of the first original music and main part start timing of the second original music, and concurrent with at least the output of said preamble.

21. (cancelled)

22. (currently amended): A game machine of which controller is operated by a player in accordance with game music, comprising:

input means for setting a play condition including a number of players and difficulty;

play condition storage means for storing the play condition set; and

game advancing means for advancing a game during automated game play according to the play condition stored during successive reproduction of the game music based on a plurality of pieces of original music,

wherein,

the game advancing means includes

original music output means for outputting during automated game play, as a part of the game music, at least original music containing a preamble, and a main part, ~~and a post-amble~~ in this order;

connection music output means for outputting during automated game play predetermined connection music, having a specific predefined association including start timing with said original music as stored, at least during the output of said preamble;

original music determination means for determining during automated game play next original music to output; and

timing control means for controlling during automated game play the original music output means and the connection music output means such that the connection music is output during a period between ~~main part end timing of the original music currently output and main part start timing of a subsequent original music~~ a reproduction start timing and an end timing of the connection music such that it coincides with the length of the preamble of the corresponding original music as determined by said predefined association including start timing.

23. (original): A game machine according to claim 22, wherein

the game advancing means further comprises timing guidance image display means for displaying timing guidance image in conformity with the play condition stored in the play condition storage means, for guiding timing at which the player is to operate the controller in accordance with the game music.

24. (original): A game machine according to claim 22 or claim 23, wherein the original music determination means determines original music to output based on a random number.

25. -26 (cancelled)

27. (currently amended): A game machine, comprising:
original music storage for storing audio data concerning at least a main part of original music containing a preamble and a main part subsequent thereto;

connection music storage for storing audio data concerning predetermined connection music prior to selection of original music for playback, said connection music having a specific predefined association including reproduction start timing with said original music as stored ~~and duration that is substantially shorter than the duration of said original music;~~

original music reproduction start timing storage means for storing original music reproduction start timing data indicative of reproduction start timing of the original music during performance of the connection music, which is set such that a period between the reproduction start timing and the end timing of the connection music coincides with the length of the preamble of the corresponding original music;

~~connection music output means for outputting during automated game play the connection music based on the audio data concerning the connection music;~~

original music reproduction start timing monitoring means for monitoring original music reproduction start timing based on the original music reproduction start timing data during a period when the connection music is output; and

original music reproduction means for beginning reproduction of the original music while overlapping with the connection music, upon arrival of original music reproduction start timing;

~~an original music output unit which outputs during automated game play the main part of the original music based on the audio data concerning the main part; and~~

~~a connection music output unit which outputs during automated game play the connection music based on the audio data and said predetermined start timing concerning the predetermined connection music during a period when at least the preamble of the original music must be output before start of outputting the main part.~~

28. - 32 (cancelled)

33. (currently amended): A game machine according to claim 3, wherein a tempo of the connection music is determined based on a tempo of the main part of the ~~first~~ original music.

34. (currently amended): A game machine according claim 3, wherein a tempo of the connection music is pre-determined as stored, based on a tempo of the main part of ~~the second~~ another original music.

35. (currently amended): A game machine according to claim 3, further comprising:

connection music tempo control means for controlling a tempo of the connection music so as to gradually vary from a tempo based on a tempo of the main part of ~~the~~ a first original music to a tempo based on a tempo of the main part of ~~the~~ a second original music.

36. (currently amended): A game machine, comprising:
original music storage for storing audio data concerning original music containing a preamble and a main part subsequent thereto;

connection music storage for storing audio data concerning connection music which is pre-associated with original music;

original music reproduction start timing storage for storing original music reproduction start timing data which is associated with original music and connection music and is indicative of the associated original music reproduction start timing during a period when the associated connection music is output, and which is set such that a period from the original music reproduction start timing to the end timing of the associated connection music coincides with the length of the preamble of the associated original music;

a connection music output unit which outputs during automated game play the connection music based on the audio data concerning the connection music associated with following original music;

an original music reproduction start timing monitor for monitoring original music reproduction start timing data during a period when the connection music is output; and

an original music reproduction unit which begins reproduction of the preamble of the original music upon arrival of original music reproduction start timing while the associated connection music is output.

37. (new): A computer readable storage medium containing a computer program for causing a computer to execute a plurality of steps, said steps comprising:

a timing storing step of storing original music reproduction start timing data indicative of a reproduction start timing of the original music during performance of the connection music, which is set such that a period between a reproduction start timing and an end timing of the connection music coincides with the length of the preamble of the corresponding original music ;

an original music reproduction start timing monitoring step of monitoring original music reproduction start timing based on the original music reproduction start timing data during a period when the connection music is output;

an original music output step of outputting at least the original music containing a preamble and the main part subsequent thereto;

a connection music output step of outputting said predetermined connection music corresponding to the original music; and

an original music reproduction step of beginning reproduction of the original music while overlapping with the connection music, upon arrival of original music reproduction start timing.

38. (new): A game machine according to claim 11, wherein said connection music output means and said original music reproduction means are operative during automatic game play.

39. (new): A game machine according to claim 11, wherein said -connection music has a duration that is substantially shorter than the duration of said original music.